

Interlaken Workshop

on Decentralization in Forestry

Findings from the Field Day Wednesday, 28 April, 2004



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Excursion 1:

Rugen-Mürren

From Government to
Governance

Rapporteur: Jeff Sayer



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Excursion 1: Rugen-Mürren

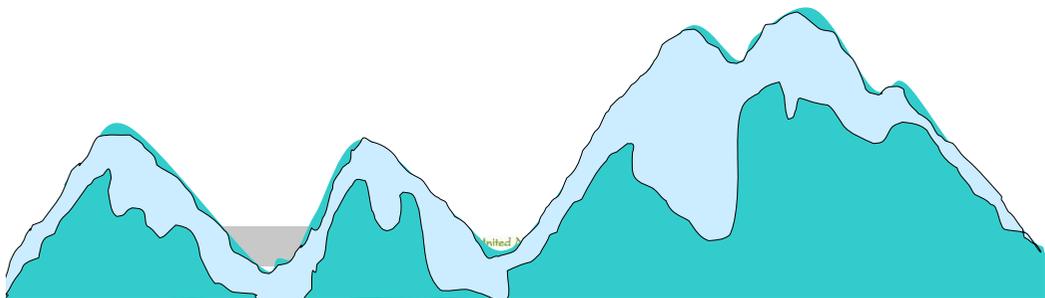
- Decentralisation of forest ownership and elite capture
- Local autonomy as a base for close to nature forest management
- Capacity building, local people and the forest service
- Incentives from urban regions and socio-economic change
- Cooperative Federalism: From Government to Governance
- Challenging adaptation to globalized conditions: From timber to services
- «Working Together Makes it Easier»: Solutions to contemporary problems



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Its really complicated:

And it takes decades



Extra-sectoral influences:

Poverty/fuel wood: early 1800s

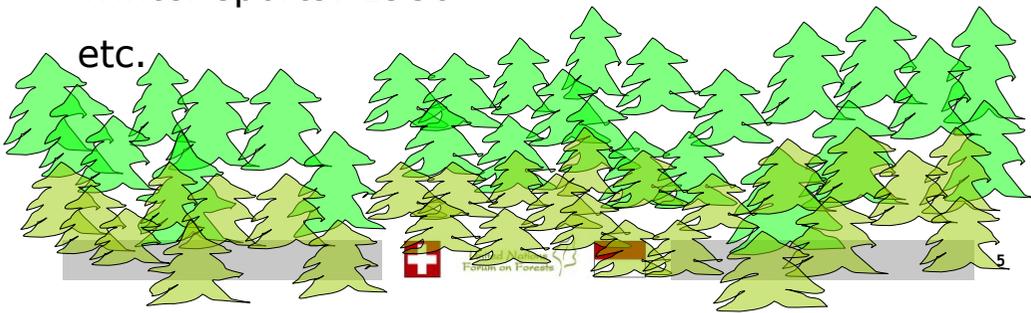
Economic expansion 1850 ++

Railways and coal: 1868

Oil economy: 1950 +

Winter sports: 1950 +

etc.

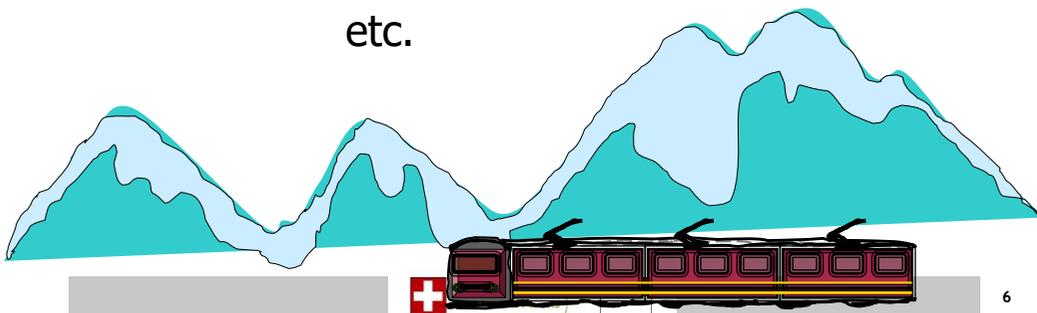


Conflicts

Within communes

Communes and cantons

etc.

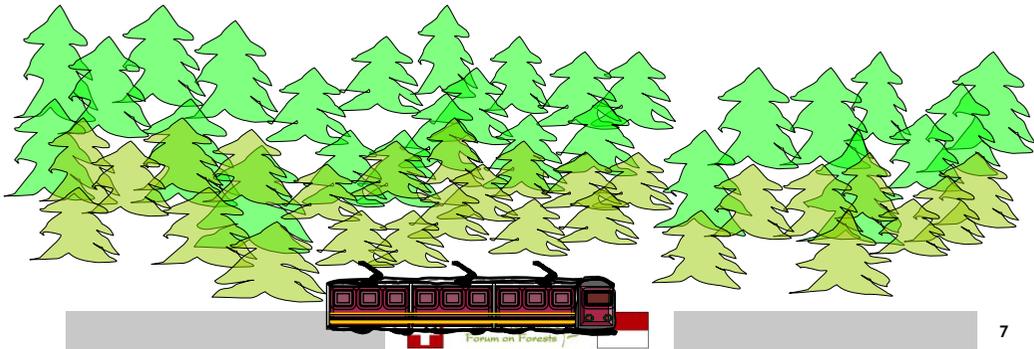


Money:

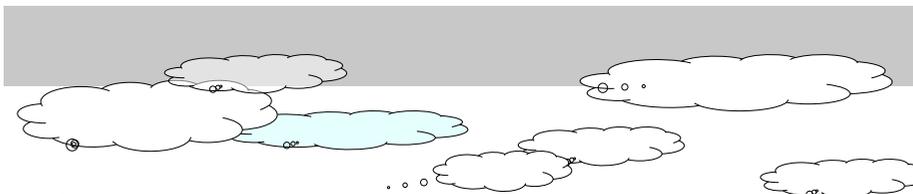
At what level do the benefits accrue?

Who pays?

Cantonal and federal payments for environmental services



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No steady state:

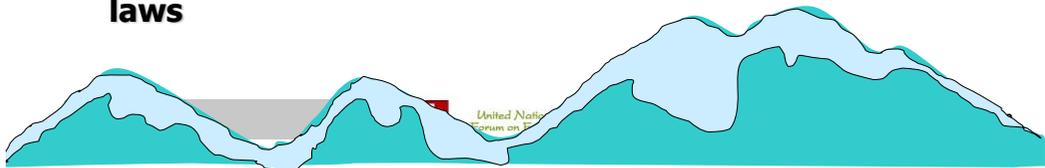
Constant evolution and adaptation

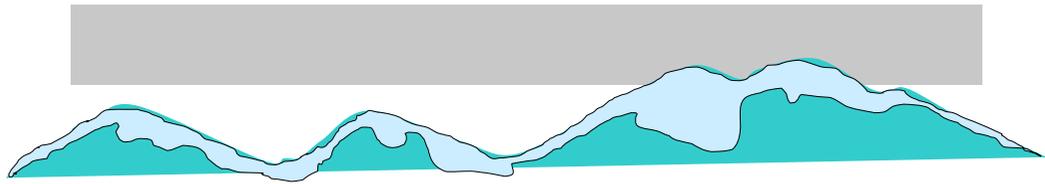
"Solidarity"

"Social capital"

Culture and "soft laws"

Can never have enough "foresters" to enforce anti-social laws

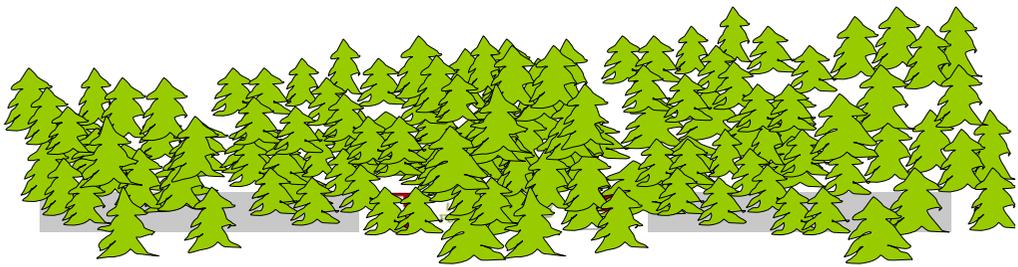




Emerging issues!

Who pays for environmental services?

Landscape values - to whom do they accrue?





Excursion 2:

Brienz

Cooperative federalism
to fight natural hazards



Rapporteur: Stewart Maginnis



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Excursion 2: Brienz

- Integral protection against natural hazards in the Canton of Berne (duties of the Confederation/of the Canton)
- Brienz torrents (history, hazard, and damage potential; projects, responsibilities of the Confederation, Canton and Communes)
- The Brienz torrents as seen by the people directly concerned



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Main topics of the Excursions to Brienz

- History of Brienz torrents
- How communal / cantonal and confederation efforts come together to fight natural hazards
- How roles and responsibilities are assigned / agreed to deliver long-term sustained outcomes
- How local political decision-making relates to centralised technical guidance and funding



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Major issues encountered

- 4 levels of response - balance between local and central input different for each
- Not really about forests per se but about a specific forest function
- Importance of having consistently applied rules and understanding for effective cooperation
- Centralised technical guidance does not have to be an obstacle to local (political) decision-making
- Uncertainty over future - will have implications for downward transfer of tasks



Conclusions

- Relationship has been successful over 100 years
- Value of having clear and shared sense of purpose that remains constant over time
- Decentralization is not a linear, uni-directional process - adaptation necessary
- Financing / resourcing is a key driver
- Absence of role of private sector involvement - needs to be re-examined in light of federal funding shortfalls



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Excursion 3:

Local Forest Organisations in Boltigen

Roles of local community organisations and the cantonal forest service in a remote and mountainous region



Rapporteur: Vinod Bahuguna



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Excursion 3: Boltigen

- Organization and decision making within the community (transparency, accountability)
- Governance: roles and cooperation of different actors (Divisional Forester, Forest Ranger, local representatives)
- Planning and monitoring instruments of forest management
- Economic situation



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Main topics of the Excursions to Boltigen

- Management of forests owned by traditional communities
- Roles and responsibilities, duties and rights of member
- Roles of the federal and canton forest department officers



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Photo 6



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Major issues encountered

- Economic constraints in the management
- Outbreak of bark beetle
- Future of present forests
- Lack of role for the traditional communities and forest ranger/ DFO in granting hunting permits
- Membership of traditional communities decided by 50 houses with house rights



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Questions and Conclusions

Q: How to improve the condition of the forest? Role of federal and canton government

C: By and large, a good institution democratically managed. Special efforts essential for improving the structure of forests so that the forest does not disappear or diminish in its present form.

C: Strategy and commitment from government agencies is needed, particularly funding and technical support.



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Excursion 4:

Emmental Farm Forests

Resource Management in privately owned forests



Rapporteur: Jill Blockhus



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Excursion 4: Emmental

- Emerging issues relating to private forest ownership
- Role and responsibilities of the Forest Division 4
- The Emmental forests - small forest plots
- Timber wealth - an undervalued and underused resource
- Regional Management Plans - an approach for the future



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Main topics of the Excursions to Emmental

Roles and responsibilities concerning private forest ownership

Planning with forest owners and rangers

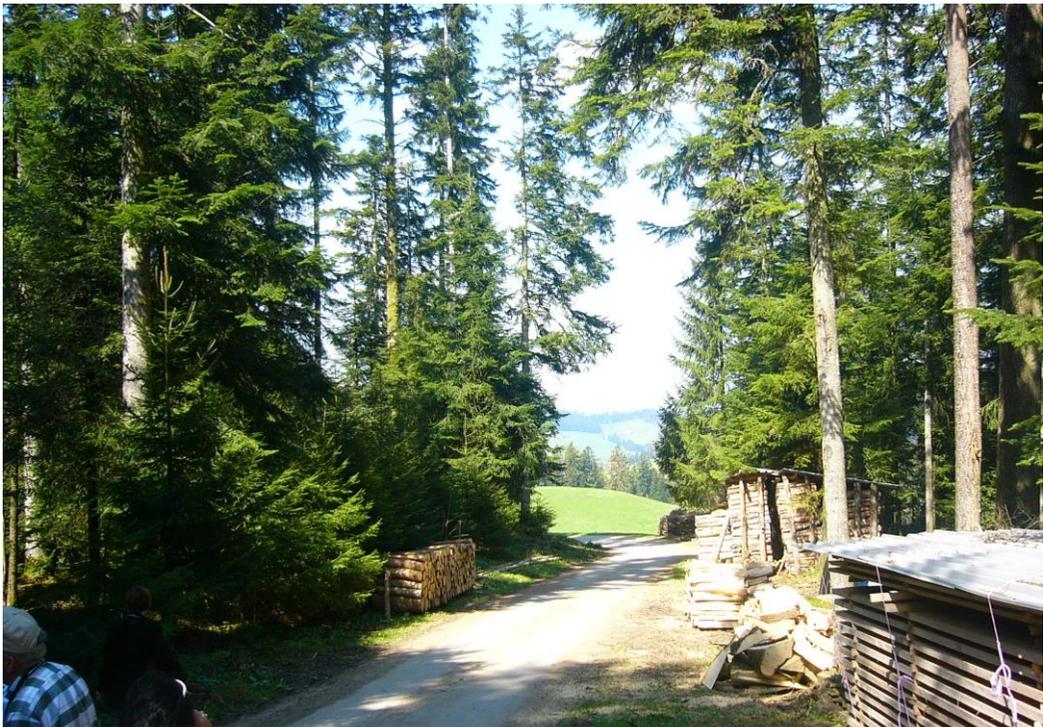
Role of forest association (marketing group)

Discussion over wooden bridge



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Major issues encountered

Economic and social considerations of small forest plots

Relationship between forest owner and ranger

Quality of wood products

Consensus building

Conclusions

Decentralization is about working together

Long term relationships over generations

Stable forest service

Recognition of importance of forestry in region



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